10/763,975

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend paragraph [~~0044~~] as follows:

[~~0044~~] FIG. 1--Bacteriophage N4 vRNAP promoters on single-stranded templates. These promoters are characterized by conserved sequences (SEQ ID NO:43) and a 5 bp stem, 3 base loop hairpin structure.

Please amend paragraph [~~0048~~] as follows:

[~~0048~~] FIG. 5--Purification of cloned vRNAP and mini-vRNAP. The left hand side shows the relative amounts of full size and mini-vRNAP proteins purified on TALON columns from the same volume of induced cells. Further concentration on a ~~monoQ~~ MONOQ column reveals that, in contrast to full size vRNAP, mini-vRNAP is stable after induction (right).

Please amend paragraph [0258] as follows:

[0258] Further concentration of the proteins can be done on an anion exchange column, such as the ~~monoQ~~ MONOQ column, a high resolution, anion exchange column. This column works at pressures less than 5 MPa, has a high capacity and gives very high chromatographic resolution.

Please amend paragraph [0605] as follows:

[0605] The full-size vRNAP and the mini-vRNAP (SEQ ID NOS:6 and 15) ORFs were cloned under pBAD control with an N-terminal hexahistidine tag (FIG. 4). The mini-vRNAP domain was cloned into the pBAD B expression plasmid, which was purchased from Invitrogen. Five restriction enzyme sites within pBAD B have been altered; the SnaI site was converted to a HpaI

site, and the PflMI and EcoRV sites were destroyed, all by site-directed mutagenesis. The BstBI and HindIII sites were destroyed by enzyme digestion followed by Klenow treatment and re-ligation. FIG. 5 (left) shows the relative amounts of full-length and mini-vRNAP proteins purified on TALON columns from the same volume of E. coli BL21 induced cells. Cloned mini-vRNAP is expressed at 100-fold higher levels than cloned full size vRNAP. Further concentration on a ~~monoQ~~ MONOQ column reveals that, in contrast to full size vRNAP, mini-vRNAP is stable after induction (FIG. 5, right). At least 10 mg of mini-vRNAP at a 20 mg/ml concentration are obtained from 1 L of induced cells in just two purification steps: TALON and ~~monoQ~~ MONOQ minicolumns. A non-histagged version of mini-vRNAP has also been cloned (SEQ ID NO:4). In this case, the enzyme is purified from a crude extract of induced cells in two steps: a promoter DNA-affinity column and ~~monoQ~~ MONOQ.

Please amend paragraph [0327] as follows:

[0327] The methods of the present invention can also be carried out on amplification products obtained by amplification of a naturally occurring target nucleic acid, provided that the target sequence in the target nucleic acid is amplified by the method used only if the target nucleic acid is present in the sample. Suitable amplification methods include, but are not limited to, PCR, RT-PCR, NASBA, TMA, 3SR, LCR, LLA, SDA (e.g., Walker et al., Nucleic Acids Res. 20:1691-1696, 1992), RCA, Multiple Displacement Amplification (Molecular Staging), ICAN.TM. or UCAN.TM.0 (TAKARA), ~~Loop-AMP~~ LOOP-AMP (EIKEN), and SPIA.TM. or Ribo-SPIA.TM. (NuGEN Technologies). There are various reasons for using a nucleic acid that is a product of another amplification method as a target nucleic acid for an assay of the present invention, such as, but not limited to, for obtaining more sensitive detection of targets, greater specificity, or to decrease the time required to obtain an assay result.